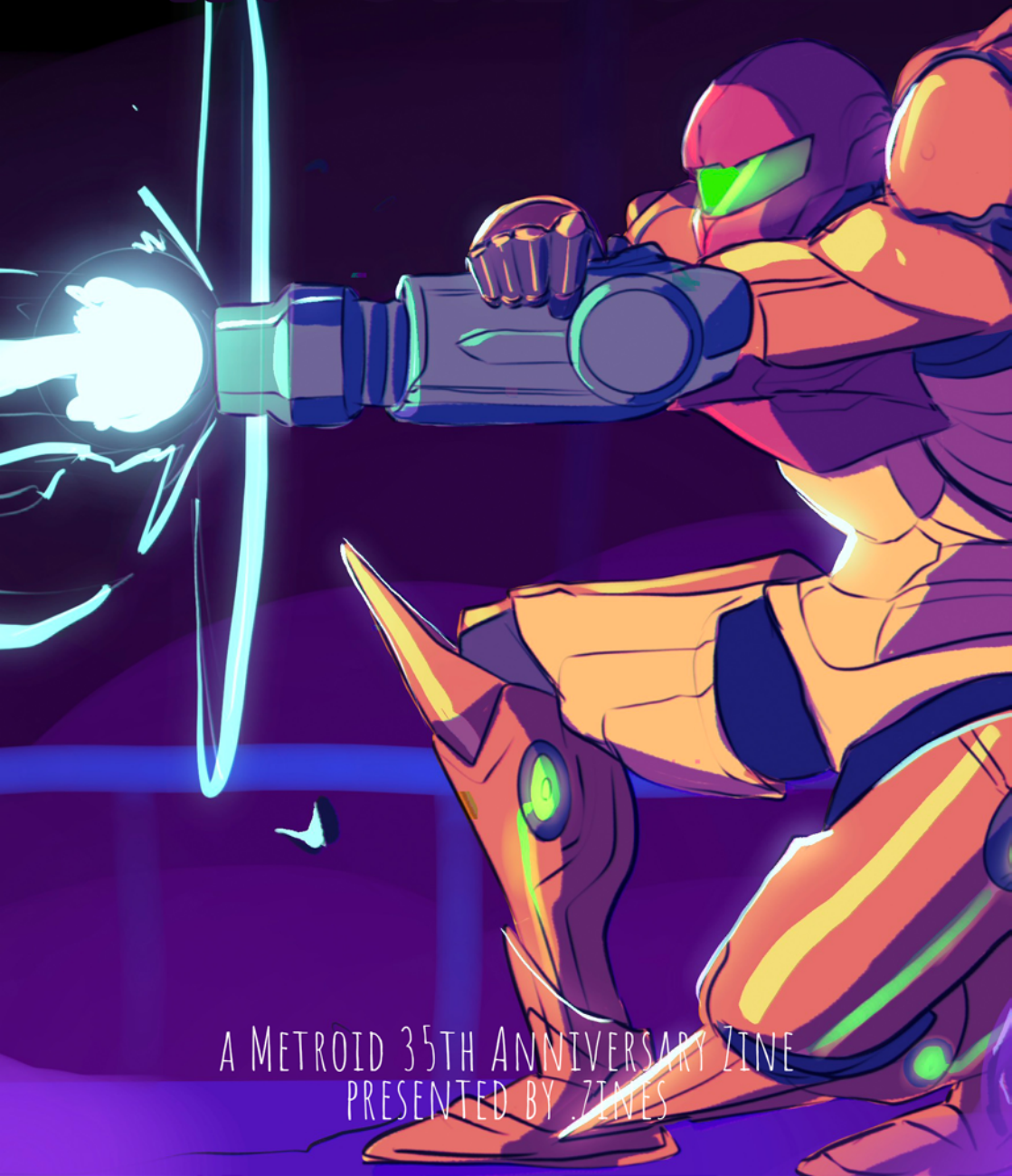


ALL THE WORLD IN ONE GIRL



A METROID 35TH ANNIVERSARY ZINE
PRESENTED BY .ZINES

The content of this zine can't be printed, sold or reposted.
Please respect the hard work behind this free project.

If you want to share this zine, retweet/reblog/share
our official social posts. Thank you.

...

... SIGNAL ACQUIRED ...

... DECODING MESSAGE ...

THANK YOU FOR DOWNLOADING THIS SPACE MESSAGE.
WE'RE SURE YOU'RE FAMILIAR WITH SAMUS ARAN,
THE BOUNTY HUNTER.

WE WANTED TO MAKE A SURPRISE FOR HER
SPLENDID CAREER AND COLLECT LITTLE
MESSAGES AND STORIES FROM ALL OVER THE
UNIVERSE AND MAKE A PRESENT TO HER 35TH
ANNIVERSARY.

BE SURE NOT TO RUIN THE SURPRISE OR
WE'LL SEND METROID YOUR WAY.
(NO, WE'RE NOT JOKING)

- .ZINES: FREE ZINE SPACECARRIER -

P.S. ONE LAST THING-
WE'RE SURE SPACE TRAVEL CAN BE BORING SO
BE SURE TO CHECK ALL DOTZINES PROJECTS ON

[DOTZINES.ITCH.IO](https://dotzines.itch.io)

ONLY THE BEST FREE ZINES FOR OUR LOVELY CLIENTS.
THIS IS TOTALLY NOT A SPACE ADVERTISEMENT.

... END OF MESSAGE ...







X by sagittamoth

Broken pieces of metal shrapnel rained down from the ceiling, clattering to the floor. Samus fell with them, landing on her feet with a sharp clank.

Rising up, she found herself in a long corridor. Sleek silver panels lined one wall. The other was covered in an expanse of windows, showcasing dozens of servers and monitors. Faint red lights flickered amid the low hum of machinery, disappearing into the darkest reaches of the corridor.

The hole in the ceiling remained, but it was much too high to reach now. Samus realised she would have to find another way out. Holding her Arm Cannon aloft, she stalked along the eerie underbelly of Sector 5.

The bitter cold prickled through her Fusion suit. Even with its ability to withstand freezing temperatures, Samus felt bare without her usual heavyweight armour. The Fusion suit was more like a second skin. Melded to her body like elastic, constricting ever so slightly. Sweat and goosebumps itching beneath the surface.

A blue Choot sprung up from the floor, halting Samus in her tracks. Its rubbery exterior stretched into a miniature parachute, bearing acid-oozing fangs. Unfazed, Samus aimed and shot a few swift Power Beams from her cannon. With a short, garbled scream, the Choot's body crumpled and dissipated into the air like debris.

Only the X parasite remained. A yellow amorphous blob that hummed and hovered through the air. A dance of survival, seeking out another victim to consume. It spiralled twice before latching onto Samus. She winced as it absorbed into the flexible material of her suit.

It didn't hurt.

When she was first infected by an X parasite on SR388, it almost destroyed

her. Her whole body had been on the brink of shutting down. The Metroid vaccine saved her life, but it came with quite a few side effects that they hadn't anticipated. Now the parasites could no longer harm her in their basic forms.

As the yellow blob melted into her suit, she felt no pain - only the fresh breath of rejuvenation. The aches in her muscles faded, a newfound energy coursing through her veins. The Metroid DNA flowing through her body rendered the X parasite no more than fodder. Sustenance.

Still, the touch made her shiver.

Continuing on, Samus soon spotted the exit; a glowing grey hatch at the end of the corridor. But before she could reach it, the hatch hissed open. Frosty air streamed in, sending a chill up her spine.

Beyond the hatch, footsteps echoed along the metallic floor. Slow and methodical. Samus' shoulders seized instinctively. A humanoid figure stepped out from the shadows. Light illuminated the green-tinted visor of its helmet.

Two white, empty eyes stared right back at her.

For the briefest of moments, Samus froze. Petrified like an ancient Chozo statue. Every muscle in her body urged her to fight, but her commanding officer's words rang through her head.

'If you see the SA-X, just run.'

'Don't think about fighting.'

The SA-X's bulky Arm Cannon clicked. Samus' breath hitched. In an instant, she fired an Ice Missile and pivoted on her heels. It whistled through the air, whizzing past the SA-X's shoulder and crashing into the wall.

Samus sprinted across the narrow hallway. Brisk footsteps marched close behind.

'Stay away.'

'If you see it, just run.'

A bright blue light flashed behind her, striking Samus in the back. She stumbled, landing on her knees and swivelling around. The SA-X's shadow loomed over her, Arm Cannon buzzing aggressively as it reached full charge.

An Ice Missile launched from Samus' cannon, striking the SA-X directly in the chest. The missile ruptured, fragments of icy debris sprinkling over her suit. Samus shivered as she looked up at the SA-X, its blank face no more than a glistening statue.

There was no time to spare.

She was on her feet again, racing along the corridor. Hoping there would be another hatch at the other end. A glacial shatter erupted behind her.

'Seconds. The Ice Missile only held it for mere seconds!'

Samus leapt into the air as the SA-X's Charge Beam launched from its cannon. The fiery orb soared beneath her feet and veered into the wall, bursting into a thousand sizzling sparks. The walls quaked around them.

Samus touched down with a thud, catching herself on the cold steel floor. The SA-X pounced after her, morphing into a jagged ball of untamed electricity. It sliced through the air like a buzz saw, smashing through the panes of glass that lined the wall.

Frantic lights flickered in Samus' periphery as she fired aimlessly behind her. The SA-X retaliated with another Charge Beam. Its blazing heat roared after her until she could feel it bearing closer, prickling her skin. Samus ducked, rolling out of its path just before the beam grazed by.

Mind racing faster than her feet, Samus thought of her many years of training. But Samus was never taught to run. She only knew how to fight. To survive. Right now, it seemed like she couldn't do either.

The far end of the corridor finally came into view. But now she was greeted by a metal wall. No hatch or ladder. Nothing but bolts and welded panels. A dead end.

Stopping wasn't an option. Samus skidded, flipping through the air and over the SA-X's head with astute poise. Firing relentlessly as she went, her beams pinged off of the SA-X's suit. A Wave Beam hissed towards her, its blue light illuminating the ceiling.

As she twisted to avoid the beam, she glimpsed a small vent atop the dead end. Her eyes widened; that was her way out. Another Wave Beam zig-zagged towards her, biting into her leg. Samus dropped to the floor.

If seconds were all her weapons could afford her, she had to make every single one count.

Gritting her teeth through the stabbing pain, Samus rushed towards the armoured parasite and blasted an Ice Missile at its face. She leapt for the SA-X, her foot slipping on its frosted shoulder. Pushing herself off clumsily, she grappled for the air. Nimble fingers caught the edge of the vent.

Below, ice cracked and crumbled. Straining to twist her torso around, Samus fired another Ice Missile into the SA-X's back.

Fingers slipped on the wall as she turned back. Samus slammed her Arm Cannon over the ledge, latching on for dear life. Searing pain shot up her sides as she pulled herself into the vent and rolled forward.

Ice shattered the instant she landed on the other side. She could hear the SA-X swivel, armour clinking as it scanned the room in search of its prey. With her back pressed to the wall, Samus held her breath and tried to steady her erratic pulse.

They waited.

The SA-X's footsteps drifted away from the wall. Still, Samus waited. She waited long after it walked back through the hatch. Until all that could be heard was her throbbing heartbeat and shallow, ragged breaths. Until

the primal heat coursing through her veins had faded and she could once again feel the cold, empty room around her.

This side of the wall was barely bigger than an elevator shaft, with no exit in sight. If Samus wanted to get out of this space station alive, she would have to go back the way the SA-X came.

Clenching her jaw tight, she leaned against the wall and eased to her feet. Listening once more for any signs of movement, she pushed off of the floor and hauled herself through the vent. Dropping down on the other side, Samus gazed upon the destruction left in the parasite's wake.

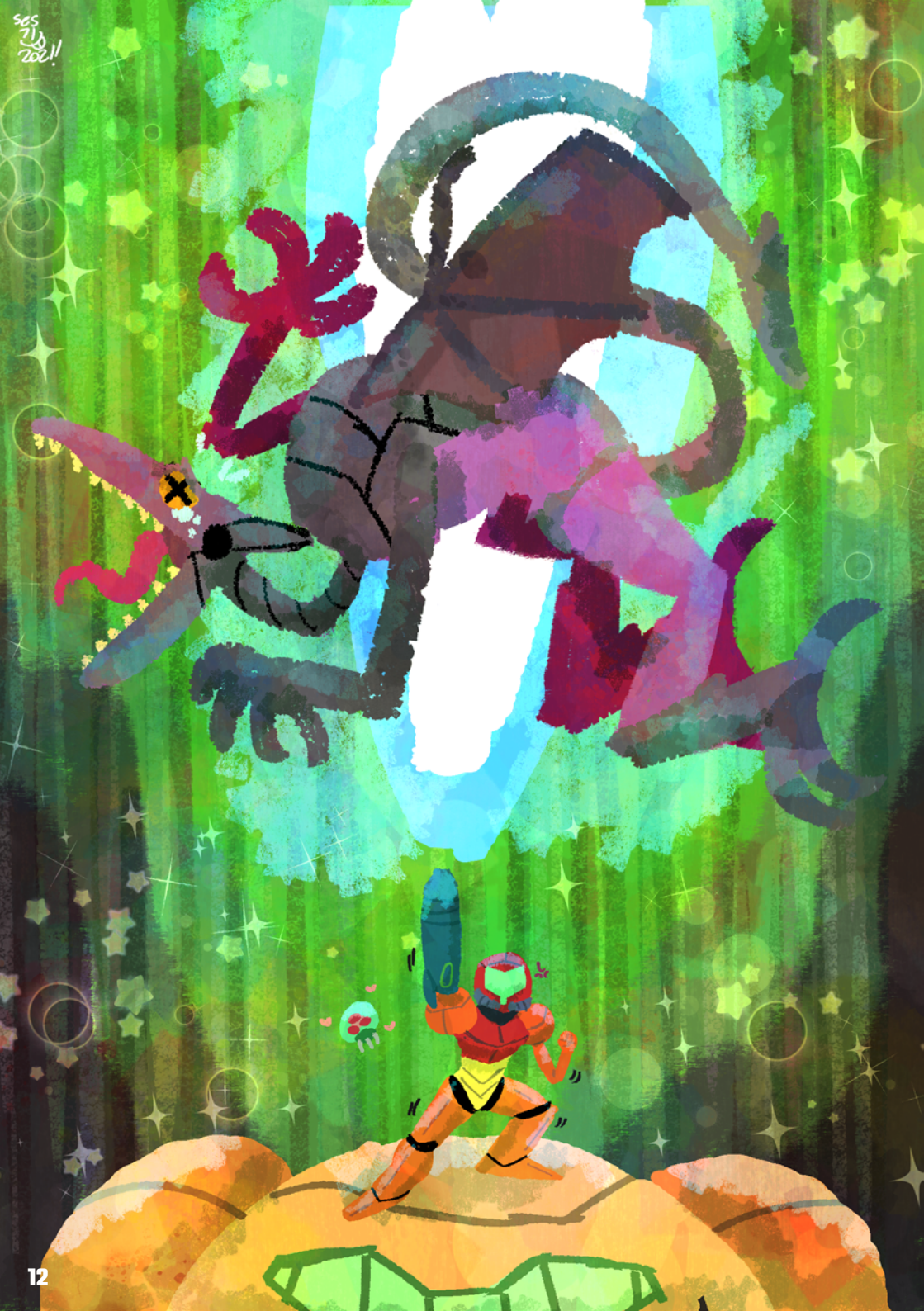
The thick walls of the corridor were marred by smoking craters. Shards of glass covered the black scorched floor. Large industrial pipes hung on hinges, billowing out steam. She stepped forward. Cautious, halting at every minute sound. The grey hatch at the other end of the corridor clunked and whined, repeatedly trying to close. But the frame had melted, blocking the mechanism from shutting.

Samus couldn't explain the utter dread that swirled in her stomach at the sight. The SA-X could be anywhere now, hiding behind any corner. Watching her every move.

Closing her eyes, she took a deep, quivering breath. She was a bounty hunter. She had faced bigger foes than this a dozen times over; Mother Brain, Ridley, Kraid, Queen Metroid, Ridley again. She had felt the cold bite of fear in her bones before, but never quite like this.

Savouring the air for a moment longer, Samus let out a resolute sigh. If this was to be her last mission, she was determined to do it right. She had to take down the X before they could reach civilization.

Even if that meant going down with them.





A METROID SHORT STORY

HARD TO REACH

WRITTEN BY DAPPER CRANIUM

HARD TO REACH

by Dapper Cranium

Ancient dust settles on my rigid form, blown in from a breeze I cannot feel. Decaying plant life entangles my limbs, shrivelled leaves brushing against my cracked skin. Crumbled sandstone blocks serve as my eternal seat, the once mighty structure lost to the eons.

An article of power floats barely a foot above my outstretched hands. Energy flows through it, casting a soft glow along my cracked arms, emanating a droning hum that is oddly calming. The Elders told me little of this object and why I must hold it like so. That was a millenia ago, and I have known no other purpose for so long.

They told me to wait. Wait for a lone hero in metallic orange armour. A hero, they said.

Our colony has long since passed - nothing left to save. But perhaps this hero could carry on our wisdom and save future generations?

Endless questions over an eternity. My body of stone knows only patience, for I have nothing else left.

Intermittent shifting in the sands below. The Beetles grow restless. They live silent, secluded lives, until their prey approaches.

Sparse vines with crimson leaves span the canopy of the canyon. Coils of winds shift the cadaverous flora. Could these be the winds of change? Or the edge of a distant storm?

Faint, aggressive cries from invertebrate species echo from beyond the high walls. Another territorial dispute between the native War Wasp species?

A shifting mechanism sounds from below - could that truly be the doors

opening? I had thought those doors were locked by energy seals? Only advanced beam weaponry could unlock them. Could this be...?

A figure, humanoid in stature. She strides into my field of vision, harsh light reflecting off her dusty orange armour. The Beetles burst from the sands, screeching as they pounce upon their prey. Entirely unfazed by their appearance, she grasps a cylindrical augment on her right arm and sets her sights on their heads. Bright flashes of light burst from the device, incinerating the Beetles amidst guttural cries of pain.

The figure lifts her visor and scans the area, high-pitched beeps ringing from her head-gear.

Ancient memories flood my mind. A hero in orange armour, scouring the galaxy for powerful technologies and exterminating terrifying creatures. This must be her. The prophecy passed down by the Elders. Is my long wait finally over? Has my charge ended?

If I could move my fossilised limbs, I would present my gift of power to this hero. My grand purpose, the only reason my soul is still tied to this world.

Almost as quick as she arrived, the figure fades from view. These ruins are vast, and surely my brethren rest in other rooms, also awaiting the arrival of this hero. My time will soon come. My patience is eternal.

Indeterminate phases pass, the ashes of the Beetles long since claimed by the winds. The passage of time had been a forgotten concept to me, until-

A familiar mechanical noise vibrates my platform. My senses sharpen to locate the source.

The figure emerges. Energy radiates from her now reinforced armour. Heat distortion frames her form, as if she recently ventured deep into this planet's molten tunnels. Her power grows, and so too does the chance of my planet's survival.

She seems more nimble somehow. Her legs carry her to greater heights than before. Additionally, she has gained a metamorphosis ability - she can now assume a small spherical shape, and fit into small holes in the walls.

From my high vantage point, I observe her rolling around the lower canyon. While in this morphed ball shape, she enters one tunnel, and emerges from somewhere much higher up. On multiple occasions, she seems to approach my balcony. Rail pathways, suitable for her alternate form, lead past me, but never close enough. Occasionally, she diverts from a path, only to fall to the canyon floor. Shortly thereafter, climbing the tunnels once again.

It is an albeit curious display. Does she have a plan in mind for this erratic movement? Or is she merely testing the limits of her new abilities?

I am plagued with questions I will never find answers to, as she once again leaves the halls of my endless watch. And so I return to my silent ruminations.

Now that I have been given tastes of my purpose, my undaunted patience is showing cracks. Movement from the canyon, and distant sounds, both steal my attention in a fevered, hopeful instant. When will the hero return, and when can I complete my duty?

The shifting mechanisms of the doors echo once more. No longer a metallic orange, her armour now displays the shifting blue and purple hues of deep water, of exotic corals and mystical crystals of ice.

As she steps into the sands below, renewing her footprints from before, a rumbling from beneath catches her attention. A small group of Beetles leap from their burrows, fangs bared. She points her weapon at the aggressors and fires a triangular wave of energy, obliterating the hapless creatures in a flash. Her travels have taken her far, gathering yet more powerful augments.

The now singed piles of Beetles were only her first target, she now directs pulses of energy at the walls. Her blasts alternate between the purple waves of energy and small encapsulated projectiles not dissimilar to the one I hold before me.

This is an enlightening development. The weapons she uses, and the object of power I hold. They are the same.

My purpose is clear. My treasure will help her save our planet. She need only find a way to reach me.

As I ponder these questions, her gaze lifts to the higher walls of the canyon. Her weapon continues to fire sporadically - energy wave, projectile, energy wave, projectile. Energy wave-

Click.

She glances at her weapon, and with an odd shunt, it clicks once more. A small number, too far for me to see properly, flashes red on the side of the device. Her mood seems to sour, but her attention returns to the high walls.

It is then that she sees me. If I could move my body I would lock eyes with her now, transmit my message, show her that I am here to help her. Alas, I must remain in this seated pose, passively presenting my treasure to her.

A long moment passes as she cocks her head from side to side, eyes fixed on my position.

Then she leaves. No second thoughts or returning glances.

I must trust in her intuition. She will find a way to me, and I will fulfil my final destiny.

My sacred duty will be fulfilled.

The quiet of these halls was once a familiar comfort for me. But now it is an agonising monotony. My form is still bound by stone, but my mind races and my heart sings its desires. My senses flit between the corners of the halls, checking for any foreign movement.

I eagerly await the return of the hero. My life energy clings to this world so that I may help her save our future.

All is clear now. Endless questions and desolate sands, replaced with a metallic orange beacon of hope.

Every fibre of my being awaits the now all too familiar grinding of the door mechanism. Heralding her arrival.

Yet a new noise reaches me. Metallic, yes, but low and rumbling.

A red and black ball emerges from a distant tunnel, landing on a balcony opposite me. The ball shifts into the hero, now sporting a deadly red and black sheen.

She leaps from the platform. A beam of energy bursts from her left hand and grapples onto my balcony, and she disappears below.

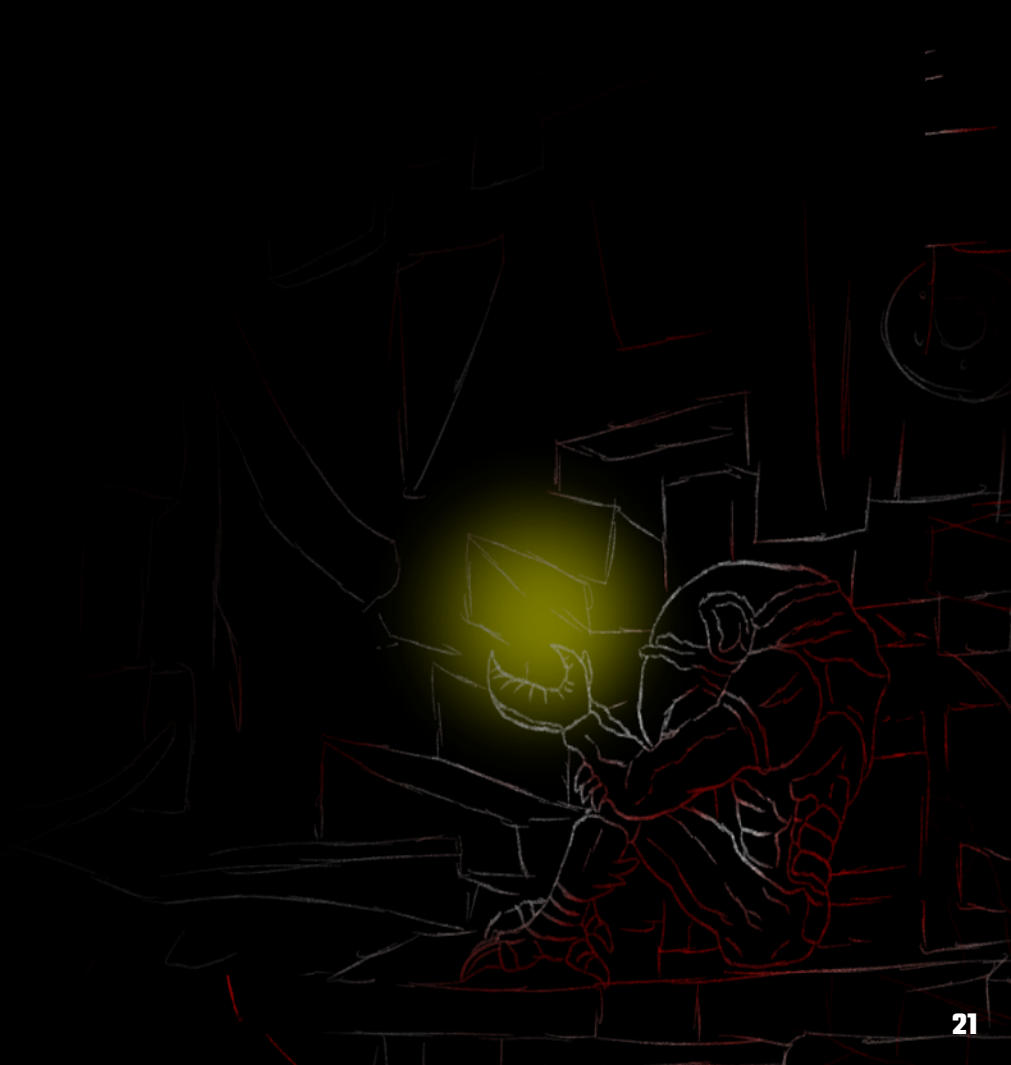
A quiet moment passes, and she leaps up from the edge, standing directly in front of me. Up close, I see only my reflection in her visor - no humanoid eyes stare back.

Her shoulders drop slightly - a tired, disappointed gesture. She grabs the object I hold and leaps from the balcony, once again gone from my view.

No other sounds. No mechanical whirs or energy blasts. The canyon dust stirs in her haste, settling soon after. All evidence of her passage erased.

Has my purpose been fulfilled? May I pass from this eternal limbo, and join my fallen brethren?

Eons of patience, for a few seconds of destiny.





AFTERIMAGE

by embryinitialics

The luminous creature that protected the Great Temple of Aether had just finished recounting the devastation of his planet and his people when he said that fortune had smiled upon them that day.

She thought of her crashed ship and a squadron of gutted troopers, of her stolen arsenal and the spectral creature she'd seen gorging itself on Phazon in the Dark Aether, and found herself inclined to disagree.

Her HUD flickered with updates to her translator module, a series of violet-colored holograms cataloging in her peripheral. She sighed, "Do you have anything to eat?"

U-Mos turned, floated wordlessly to the colonnade, fetched a simple carved bowl, and filled it with a thick concoction from some sort of dispenser embedded in the wall. Watching it drop from the orifice into the dish was vaguely reminiscent of watching eggs spurt out of an ovipositor; it did little to encourage her appetite. Still, food was food.

She took the bowl when he offered it and ran a quick scan for toxins. It was safe for consumption, and nutritionally dense. She sat beside the pulsing energy controller and took off her helmet.

Her gauntlet was covered in Splinter guts and webbing. She dug in with her fingers anyway.

[Agon was a wasteland. It was hard to imagine the fertile plains the lore spoke of, the sprawling farmland. Nothing grew but bearerpods and blueroot trees, and a few predators were all that remained of the once diverse ecosystem. It was scorched, corrupted. And what lay beyond the rifts was something far worse.]

A starborne terror, the Luminoth had called the meteor that infected their world. Samus couldn't shake the feeling that she'd seen this terror all before.]

U-Mos studied her while she ate, crouching from his great height to join her closer to the floor. He summoned an orb of light in one hand, attracting a flurry of tiny moths—absently, the way she might drum her fingers on the gunship console.

"Surviving an onslaught of Ing is no small feat. Are you a soldier?"

"I'm a mercenary," she said over her mouthful. "A bounty hunter."

"I see." He paused, deliberating, before he ventured, "We have very little we can offer you for your services."

She thought of the abandoned temple grounds, looked down at the tasteless, synthesized mush in her bowl, and said, "Yeah, I figured."

But she had other reasons for staying. Left unchecked, the Ing would spread across the galaxy like plague; the energy transfer module bonded to her battlesuit was all that stood between this world and destruction, and would protect her while she recovered her equipment; she needed answers about the dark creature that wore her armor; and friendship and debt could be just as valuable as any bounty. Not to mention her ship was still undergoing repairs, so she couldn't leave even if she wanted to.

The Luminoth also had a gentle nature about him that belied his imposing stature. It reminded her of someone else.

"Your armor," he murmured. "It's of Chozo design. Was it a reward? Or perhaps you stole it?"

She frowned at her bowl, took her time drinking the last of the slop before she answered. "No. I didn't steal it."

"I knew a warrior like you, once," he mused, eyes crinkling to resemble a thoughtful smile. "But she was no bounty hunter."

[Torvus had been engulfed by war and by the sea. Once tranquil forests had become a treacherous bog, thick with swamp water and venom weed and overrun with the fierce creatures that were able to use the transformation to their advantage. It was Aether eating itself.]

Most of the temple had flooded. Their lore and statuary offered a glimpse into the conflict that had ravaged this place, left behind enough names and dates that Samus could piece together their gradual fall. It all seemed distant, swallowed up in time and decided before she was born.

It all seemed distant, until, traversing the catacombs and the gathering hall, she looked down at the slabs extruding from the walls that she'd been using as platforms, and spied the shapes within: mummified Luminoth warriors, entombed beneath her feet.]

She replaced her helmet, glancing sidelong at the door that led down to the temple sanctuary. A lore projector beside it gleamed in purple hues, a translucent hologram turning slowly just above the emitter, as if in offering. She scanned the data into her logbook to review later.

What she really needed was a better idea of where she was going. She'd downloaded the map data from the marines' compound, but it was limited to the grounds in the vicinity of the Great Temple. Beyond the eastbound transport that was her destination, she didn't even have a basic topography scan.

She didn't know how she always ended up in these situations: diving headlong into hostile territory blind and missing half her arsenal.

"Would that I could go with you," U-Mos sighed, watching her stand. "But I cannot leave this temple unprotected. I must remain with the energy controller and with my people."

"I work better alone," she told him, readjusting the calibration on her arm cannon. Making sure she still had all five of her paltry missiles.

He didn't seem satisfied with her answer. Maybe because his isolation was out of necessity rather than by choice. Maybe because he would have preferred to have someone to fight beside for a change. She thought of the sleeping faces in the hibernation cocoons below them—nameless to her, precious to him. Faces that might never wake.

"Do you have family down there?" she asked. "In stasis?"

He smiled softly. "No. I had a wife and children."

He didn't elaborate, and she didn't press. People didn't usually like to talk about what they'd lost.

"And you? Where is your homeworld? Your family?"

It felt like a loaded question. Peculiarly complicated for sounding so benign.

"I was born on a mining colony," she finally said, and snapped her arm cannon shut. "It's gone now."

[Even abandoned, their Sanctuary was impressive. From the height of the cliffs, the stars above and below gleamed in hypnotic synchrony, and what they had built in the milky void between them seemed endless. But it's glittering halls were infested.]

The last sentinel of the Fortress Temple was destroyed by his own creations. They had been corrupted by the Ing Horde, and then taken to Dark Aether to do their bidding. The massive, dismantled pieces in the temple sanctuary whispered about what sort of colossal mechanoid they had guarding the last of Aether's stolen energy; that was something to chew on as she marched down the throat of the Hive.

There was a peculiar sort of tragedy in what had happened here, she thought: that it was the very wonders meant to ensure their survival that had ultimately destroyed them.

What could be more tragic than that?]

U-Mos took his place before the energy controller—where he had stood for decades before she arrived, and where he might well lie for decades after. A sentinel in every sense of the word.

“The temple in Agon’s dark shadow holds what you seek,” he said, his eyes sweeping toward the exit. “Return the missing energy, before Agon is lost forever to the Ing.”

She passed him a curt nod as she set off, and he bowed his head in a solemn sort of farewell. But she hesitated when she disrupted the shield on the door, staring blinkingly into the elevator hologram.

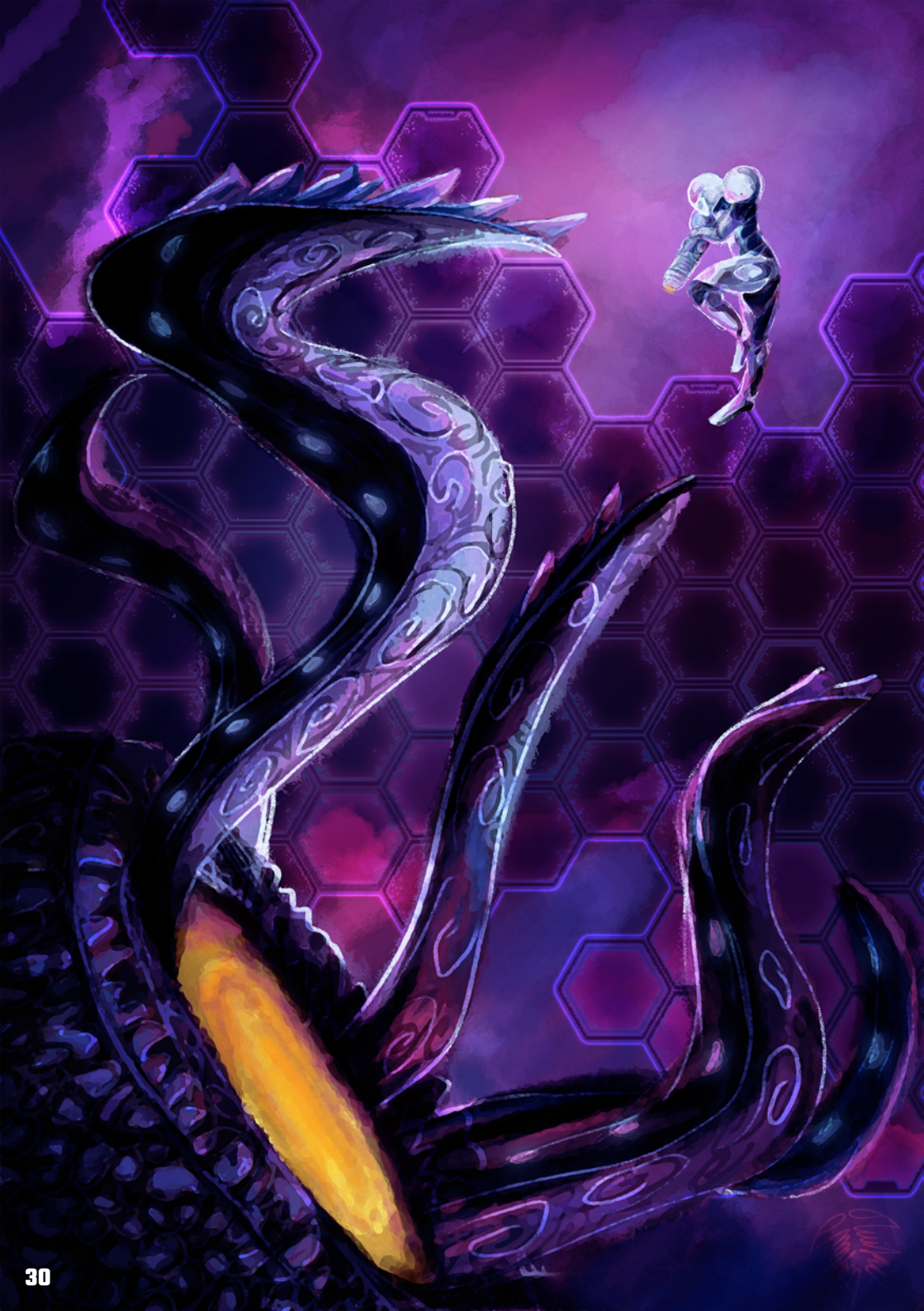
Somehow, it was hard to leave.

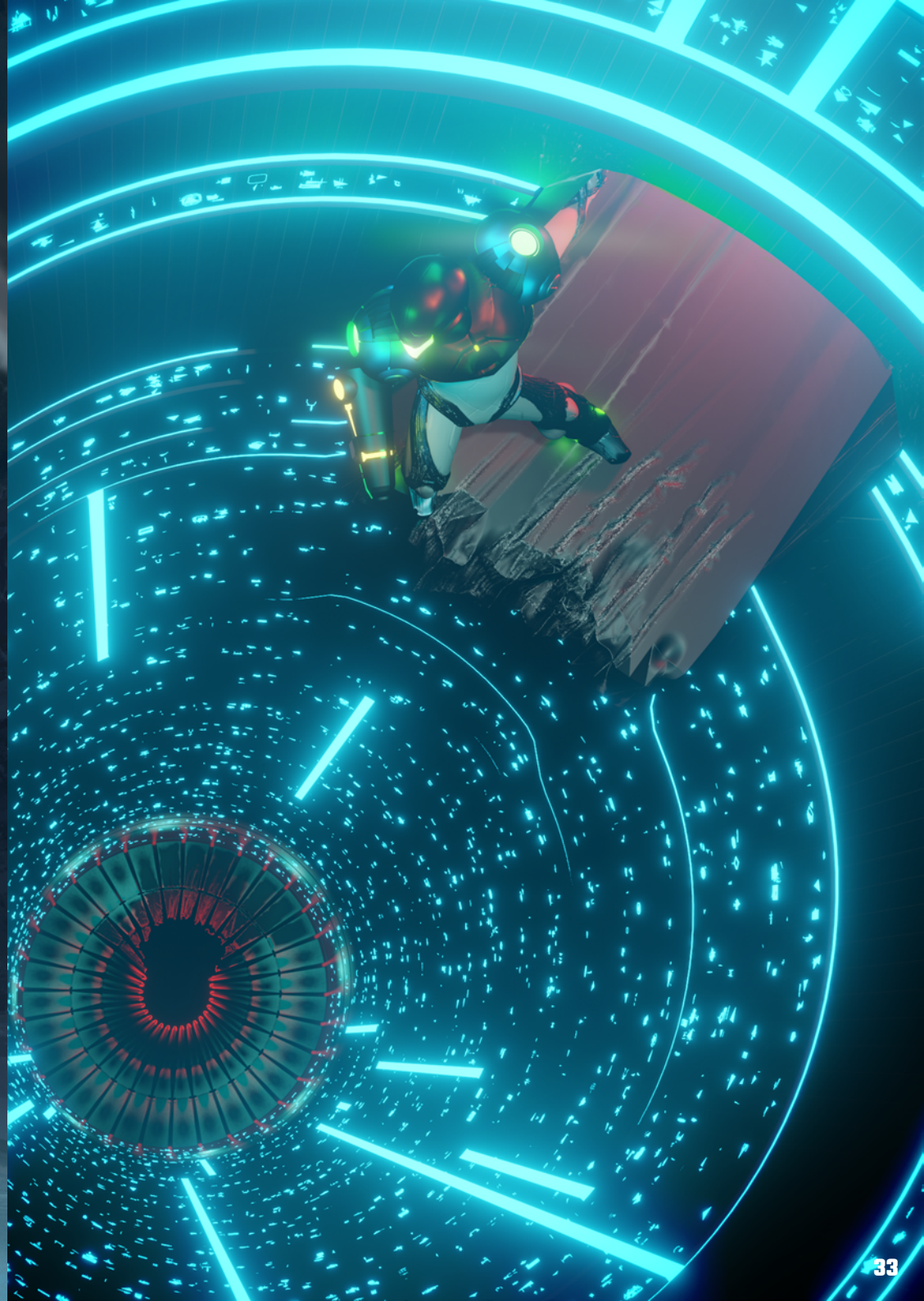
She resisted the urge to turn back, moving down the hall, and stepped into the hologram. She met the Luminoth’s eyes as she turned on the platform just before the door shuttered.

The floor descended, mimicking the pressure of the weight on her chest she couldn’t explain. It was easy to chalk it up to lingering unease surrounding her ominous doppelganger, or having fired on marines that morning, or having the survival of an entire civilization thrust on her shoulders. But that didn’t explain why U-Mos’s face lingered in her mind like an afterimage, why she could imagine his grim features turned up in a gentle smile, or the soft rumblings of familiar laughter. Why it felt hard to say goodbye.

She squared her shoulders as the lift reached the temple sanctuary, scanning the violet hologram that blocked the east-facing exit and heading for the transport. Heading for the wasteland of Agon.

It felt like she had done this all before.





BOUNTY

by Cavalierious

She should be dead.

First, she feels pain. Blistering heat leaves her feeling like she's been ripped apart and stretched thin. A pounding in her head rattles her to the bones. She feels torrid in her suit, her gloved hand gripping and pulling at the material to no effect.

Then, there's a soothing cool like she's being mended. Carefully folded and put back together as things slowly shift back into focus.

Samus's mind is muddled, her world rocked and confused. She remembers Mother Brain ending it; the burn of laser fire searing through her bones, the blistering white cold that replaced the red-hot blood that flowed through her veins. It'd been the end for her. Samus knows it.

"Why am I still alive?" It's a soft murmur to herself, even though she knows there isn't anyone else there. There can't be, won't be. She'd come to Tourian alone to handle this quest, a true testament of her solitary nature.

Samus is a lone wolf. Always has been and always will be. There are some things that you can't change in a person, things that are coded straight into their DNA. Samus is a reclusive sort, her only companion her Beam.

With one exception, of course. But that's a time come and gone, retired to the past. Nothing but a fleeting memory now.

Mother Brain is strangely quiet, tucked into the corner of the room as a looming, gray husk. It feels wrong, here, but Samus can't find the energy to move and investigate. Instead, she kneels there, breathing heavily, her legs leaden.

Everything's labored and distorted. Her brain, her body, the room around

her. A shadow crests over her, hovering just above. Samus grunts as her eyes narrow and blurred vision clearing, because it can't be, it can't be-- It is.

The Metroid. She instantly knows it is, the kind recognition born of fond remembrance. The once-hatchling still brings forth warm memories within her heart, soothing over her as she utters a pitiful half-sob of disjointed pain.

Nothing makes sense. Samus blinks as though she isn't seeing correctly. Her helmet must be malfunctioning, her vision flickering slightly in its display. But then it rights itself, the fuzzy picture refining like a fog's been lifted.

The Metroid swoops in closer, lovingly, still like a child.

It followed her around like one, as though she were its mother. Mother Brain was unsuccessful in cultivating that same feeling.

Were Samus feeling better, she might laugh at the absurdity of it all. She thinks back to the events that led up until now. Finding the hatchling and then losing it. Ridding Ridley of his earthly coil only to find the hatchling's capsule long broken and empty.

The desperation that filled her, followed by the dread of the unknown. Samus wasn't the motherly sort, still isn't. Until she was for a brief moment in her life.

Then she first arrived here in Tourian and it attacked her, a hatchling no more. A Metroid instead, fully formed and utterly dangerous. Breathtaking in its powerful, realized glory. Samus felt a smidge of pride even when she defended herself.

But then it stopped the moment it realized who it was it held within its grasp, who it was that it sucked the life from. It'd healed her and ran away, shamed by the embarrassment of not recognizing her. Its would-be mother were this a less cruel world.

At least, that's what Samus assumes. Impossible to tell when it comes to a Metroid, she supposes, even ones you've grown accustomed to. But, actions speak volumes and since the hatchling's birth, it's only proven to be her friend.

She hasn't seen it since, assumed it'd fled, lost to the aether. Lost to space.

Or not.

Samus's head pounds, her heart pounds, everything pounds. She feels like she's been crushed into dust and rearranged. She'd give anything to take the damn suit off. And have a good meal and massage, working out the sore kinks in her muscles and spine.

The hatchling has to be a figment of her pain-addled mind.

Only it isn't.

The Metroid moves, hovering closer, caressing her with a sharp pincer that screeches across her shoulder. She can't feel it through the suit, but she can imagine it, a smooth gesture that speaks volumes. Affection, it breeds, even now.

Then the creature takes hold.

Samus has felt this before, she thinks, as it latches onto her. The cold-fire burn of the energy transfer. Only this time, it's different, the Metroid feeding her as Samus slowly regains strength.

In the background, Mother Brain twitches. Samus sees it in her peripheral, fingers itching to ready herself. She can't find the strength, still too tired and weak to move.

But she's on the mend. Mother Brain shrieks in rage as she moves once more, slowly pulling herself upright. Samus doesn't panic, not yet, but she will soon. She's breathing better, with smooth inhalations as her suit begins to function properly once more.

Not fast enough, she thinks.

The Metroid's grip on her is stifling but harmless. It doesn't seem to see that Mother Brain's on the move again, slowly lumbering over to where they are. Samus tries to pull away, no longer haggard and spent, but the Metroid hangs on, determined to give her all that it can.

It's already too late to warn it. Mother Brain's power comes down full force as she attacks.

Everything happens in slow motion. Samus doesn't move. Neither does the Metroid, holding firm as it transfers everything that it has. Mother Brain rains down fire, screaming into the void.

The Metroid falls to the ground, dead.

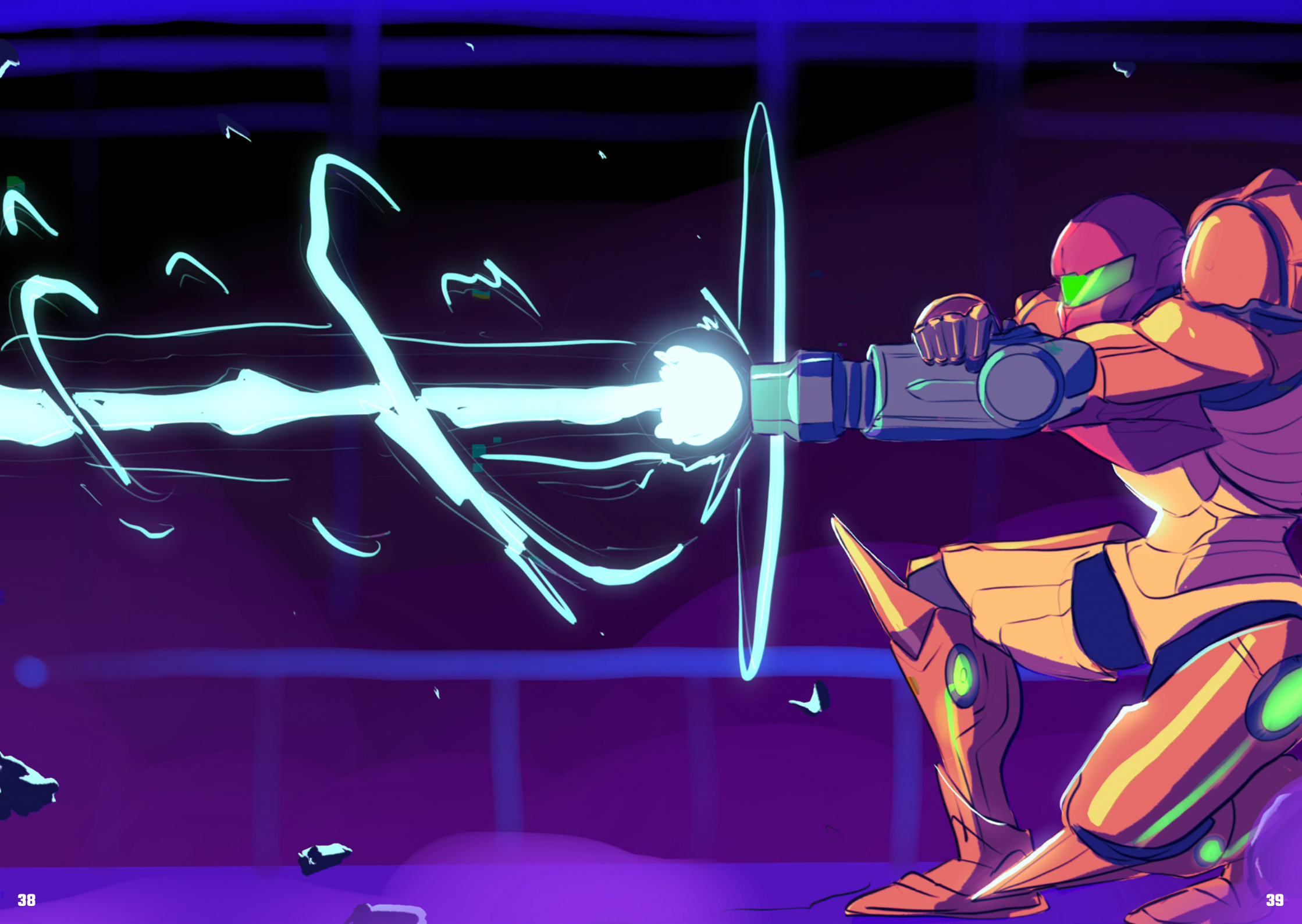
Samus stares, her eyes wide and uncomprehending at first. Then she feels the power that now pulses through her suit. Not just healed anew, but something else entirely.

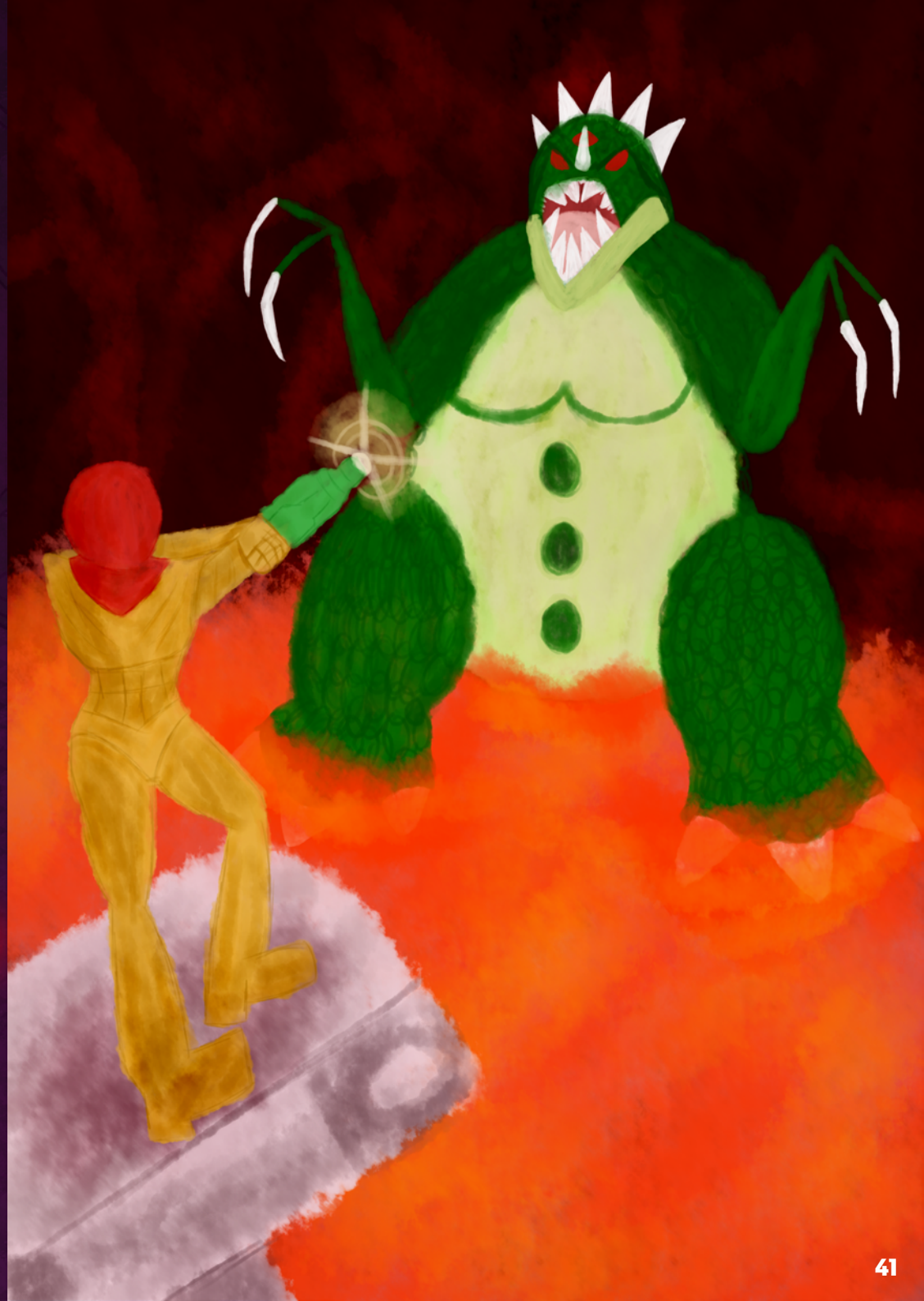
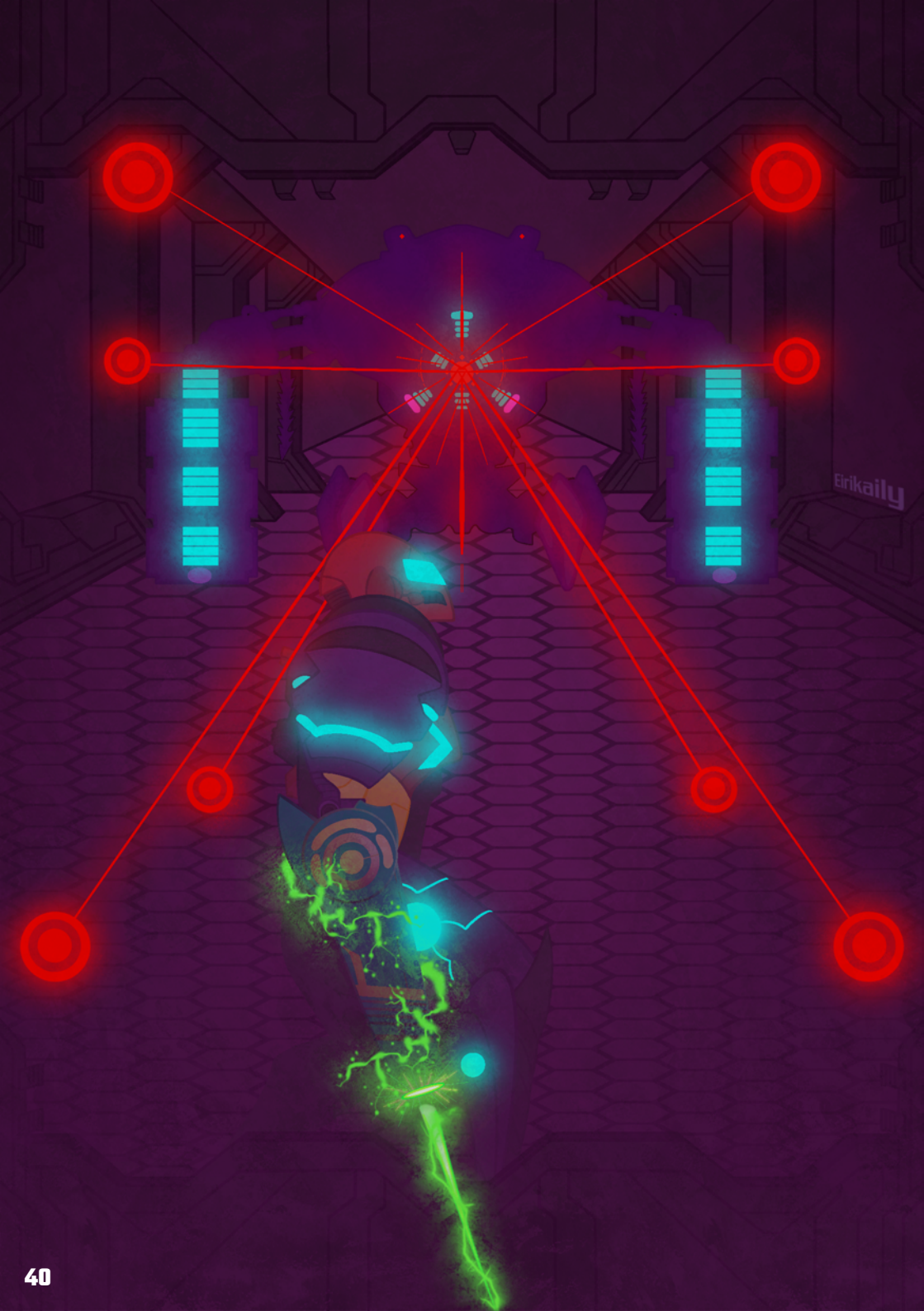
Something that belongs to someone else, given to her when Samus thought all hope was lost.

In her youth, Samus fought to avenge her mother. Then she fought to save the world. And now, at this moment, Samus knows only one thing: the hatchling sacrificed itself to save her and gift her this last thing. The selfless kind of act that can only end with another.

She looks at Mother Brain opposite her, the creature loosing a piercing cry of terror as she rises and readies her attack. Time to return fire, exactly what Mother Brain calls her own.

Samus raises her Beam and takes aim.





KRAID

by ladydaylily

Upgrading her suit hadn't been as much of a challenge as she had thought. Getting there was more of a hassle, but now she could make her way back through the throngs of enemies to face one of the enemies that had given the Federation such a difficult time. Kraid. He resided beneath Brinstar in an area named after him. The reports she had received had described him as an enormous green reptilian beast that shot missiles from the large holes in his stomach. He was also the commander of the space pirates. It was a logical assumption that the way to his lair would be heavily fortified - perhaps with even stronger enemies than those in Brinstar. With her Varia suit and newly acquired charge beam, she was ready to plunge deeper into the planet.

Scattered through the planet were statues, familiar bird statues, that housed the upgrades she needed to progress on her mission. Her job didn't allow for reminiscing on bygone eras, nor for those 'stop and smell the roses' moments. She was fighting for her life and to accomplish things no one else was able to. As much as she wanted to, she knew she couldn't risk thinking about her past, about the ones that raised her. Their presence in the depths of the planet are all but forgotten. The screeching of the monsters on the other side of the door was just another familiar sound to her. She was secure in here - at least for now, so she let herself take a moment to remember those that raised her.

The Chozo, a race of humanoid bird people, had taken her in as one of their own. They raised her, infused her with their DNA for her survival, and taught her how to take care of herself. The days she'd spent here on Zebes under their care had been some of the happiest days of her life. She could remember their smiling faces, and the warmth she'd felt from

their companionship. She would never forget.

And then it was over. It was time to get back to her mission. Sentimentality would only get her killed, so she buried the rest of her memories and continued on.

The door to Kraid was just within sight. The only thing that stood between her and the space commander were Zeelas and Geegas. Swiftly dodging their attacks, Samus readied her cannon and made short work with her charge beam. Blasting through the last obstacle that remained between them, she made her way into Kraid's lair.

It was large and spacious - big enough for the space commander and any underlings he might have. Her boots clacked against the metal underneath her feet. The reddish walls set the atmosphere for the fight that was to come, and a short distance off was another door.

Another upgrade.

The towering monstrosity loomed over her, and with a guttural scream from Kraid, the fight began. A part of her had wondered if the reports had been exaggerating, that Kraid wasn't as monstrous as he had been made out to be, but no. He was more grotesque and gargantuan than even they had made him out to be.

With her cannon at the ready, she launched three missiles into the mouth of her foe. His screams rang out through the chamber as Samus dodged an incoming attack. The rocks made contact with the wall behind her, shattering into pieces.

That was close.

If she failed here then the pirates would continue with their plans to clone metroids and that was all the world needed - organisms that could suck the life dry out of anyone and anything. Would the metroids turn

against the pirates, eventually, should she fail? She didn't want to find out. Kraid was just one more target that she had to face, to destroy. Though the pirates were cunning enough to come up with such a horrendous plan, Samus only hoped that she alone would be enough to stop them. Of course... everyone else the Federation had sent had met a... less than stellar end. She had been their last resort.

But this was no time to be consumed in her thoughts of whatever might come should she fail. Kraid lashed out with his claws and as they connected with her suit, she could hear both the sounds of the metal scraping and feel the razor sharp claws as her suit took damage.

The platform under her gave way just as he launched his own missiles from the holes in his abdomen. They stuck one-by-one in the wall under her feet.

Maybe I can use these.

Though they had probably been meant to spear her, they made for ample platforms instead. Fortunately they had struck the wall in such a way that she was able to jump up them as if they were like stairs. By the time she made it back to the top, the platform she had been standing on before had regenerated. Taking this chance, she leaped back to her former position and as Kraid opened his mouth, she shot more missiles into his open mouth.

How many would she need to take down her target? She wasn't sure, but she knew the less she used, the better as she would need them later on. As she tried to switch to her other missile launcher, Kraid swiped at her again, shooting more rocks and other projectiles at her. He was fighting, too, just as she was. The only difference between them is that for her, this was just another job. Stopping him and his cohorts from getting their hands on the Metroids was just another part of it. So was saving the galaxy if this could even be considered that. Whatever their plans were, she would stop them. And the Metroids? She'd put a stop to them too if they were really as dangerous as they were rumored to be.

Dodging the rocks, she heard a 'ting' as something connected with her suit and she felt her shoulder move backwards as they connected. Kraid's nails slammed into her and she felt herself get pushed back. Catching herself before she fell, she saw the energy meter in her suit fall.
I have to be more careful.

Again, she had lost herself to her thoughts. Common mistakes for someone with little experience, but she'd had missions before. She was hardly without experience.

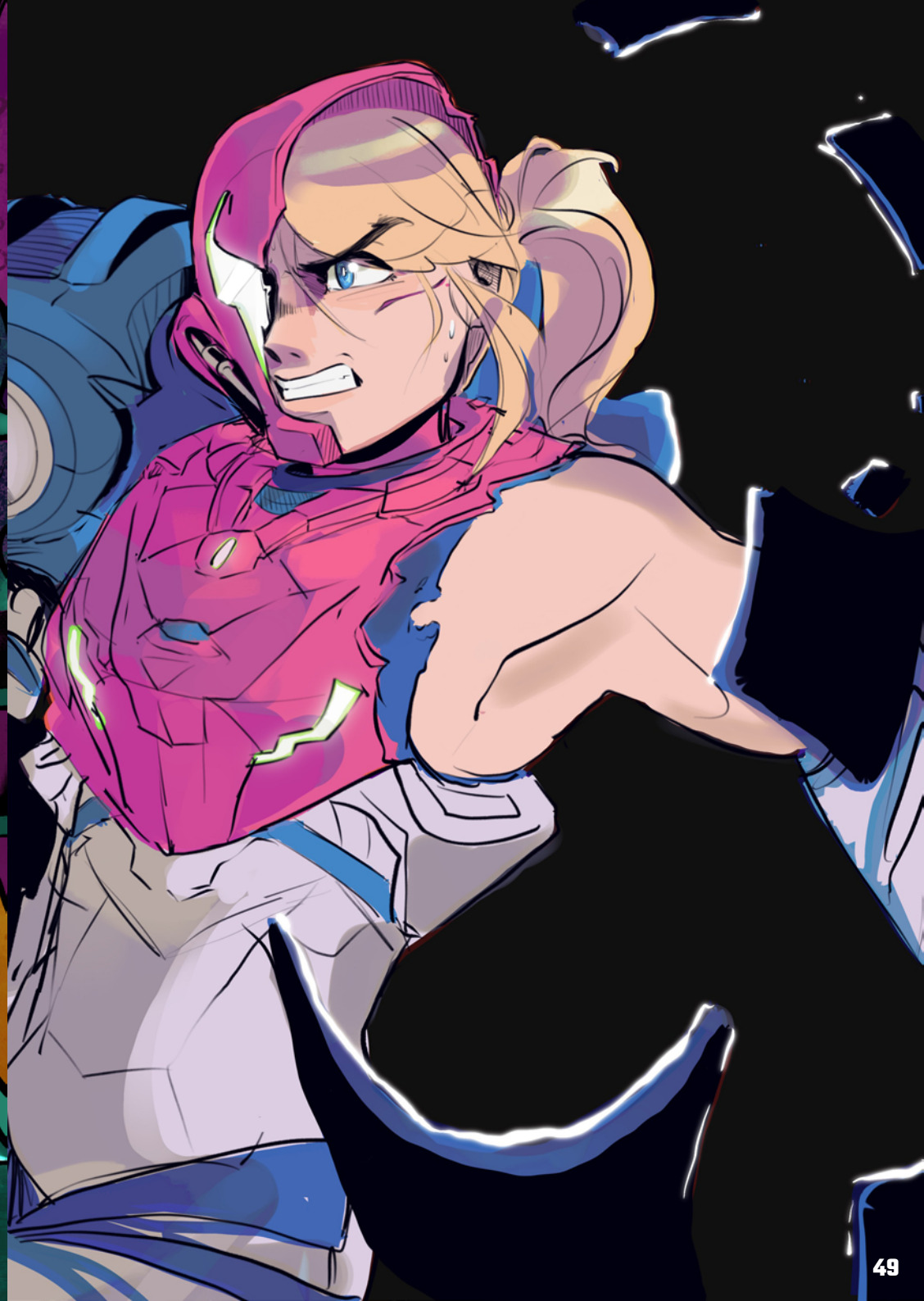
Kraid screeched once more. His jaw is unhinged as it looked like he was preparing to launch more rocks and missiles at Samus.

It's now or never.

She'd been saving them, the super missiles, for a quick finish and it was now or never. Aiming at the inside of his mouth, she switched missile types and fired three times. The missiles connected and with a final, ear-splitting screech, Kraid was finished.

The silence afterwards was deafening, but it gave her a moment to collect herself. Taking a deep breath, she jumped from her perch and ran through the door that had been behind her adversary. With an item in hand, she scaled the walls of the lair and plunged deeper into the planet. She was one step closer to Mother Brain and the Metroids. One step closer to saving the galaxy.





cinnonym Cover Artist/Artist

https://instagram.com/_cinnonym/
Pages: Front & Back covers, 38–39, 49

Cavalierious Writer

https://twitter.com/_Cavalierious_
Pages: 34–37

Dapper Cranium Writer/Artist

<https://www.instagram.com/dappercranium/>
Pages: 14–21

Doppio Hearn Artist

<https://www.deviantart.com/sweetdoppio>
Page: 41

eirikaily Artist

<https://www.instagram.com/eirikaily/>
Page: 40

embyrinalics Writer

<https://embyrinalics.tumblr.com/>
Pages: 24–29

Emily Vincent Artist

<https://twitter.com/CapriceCrow>
Page: 31

Jelly Artist

https://www.instagram.com/jellylord__/
Page: 4

Jomarori Artist

<https://twitter.com/Jomarori>
Page: 5

justj_d Artist

https://twitter.com/Justj_d
Pages: 46–47

ladydaylily Writer

https://twitter.com/lady_daylily
Pages: 42–45

LanaeComics Artist

<https://twitter.com/LanaeComics>
Page: 22

Lapirin Artist

<https://twitter.com/lapirindaart>
Page 30

Linkyu Artist

<https://twitter.com/LinkyuTL>
Page: 33

Nakoo Artist

<https://nakoo.art>
Page: 13

Neri Artist

<http://twitter.com/NeriRubeedo>
Page: 6

pineapplegrenader Artist

<https://twitter.com/PineappleGbomb>
Page: 12

sagittamoth Writer

<https://twitter.com/sagittamoth>
Pages: 7–11

saxparasite Artist

<https://twitter.com/saxparasite>
Page: 48

Villtura Artist

<https://twitter.com/villtura>
Page: 32

Zazi Artist

<https://twitter.com/HyenaMonster>
Page: 23



Happy Metroid 35th Anniversary!



It's so strange to think about it, but it's really been a long time since the first Metroid game. Samus grew bigger and stronger and it's a big deal in gaming history. Some of us supported her since the beginning of her adventures, others are new to space hunting. From 2D to 3D, from Zebes to Phaaze, from Ridley to SA-X... she won't run from a fight and we know how Samus saved the universe over and over again during these long 35 years. With Dread and the new Prime 4 coming out we can all hope that we can play even more Samus adventures in the near future.

Thanks for downloading this zine! It was a blast working with all the contributors. They did their best to celebrate our favourite space hunter. I really hope you all enjoyed it.

We can't wait to play Dread and who knows... maybe we'll see each other again in another Metroid zine.

In the meantime please check our other zine projects.
I promise you won't be disappointed.

nini @dotzines
<https://dotzines.carrd.co/>

Additional Credits

Metroid Games & Original Art/Renders

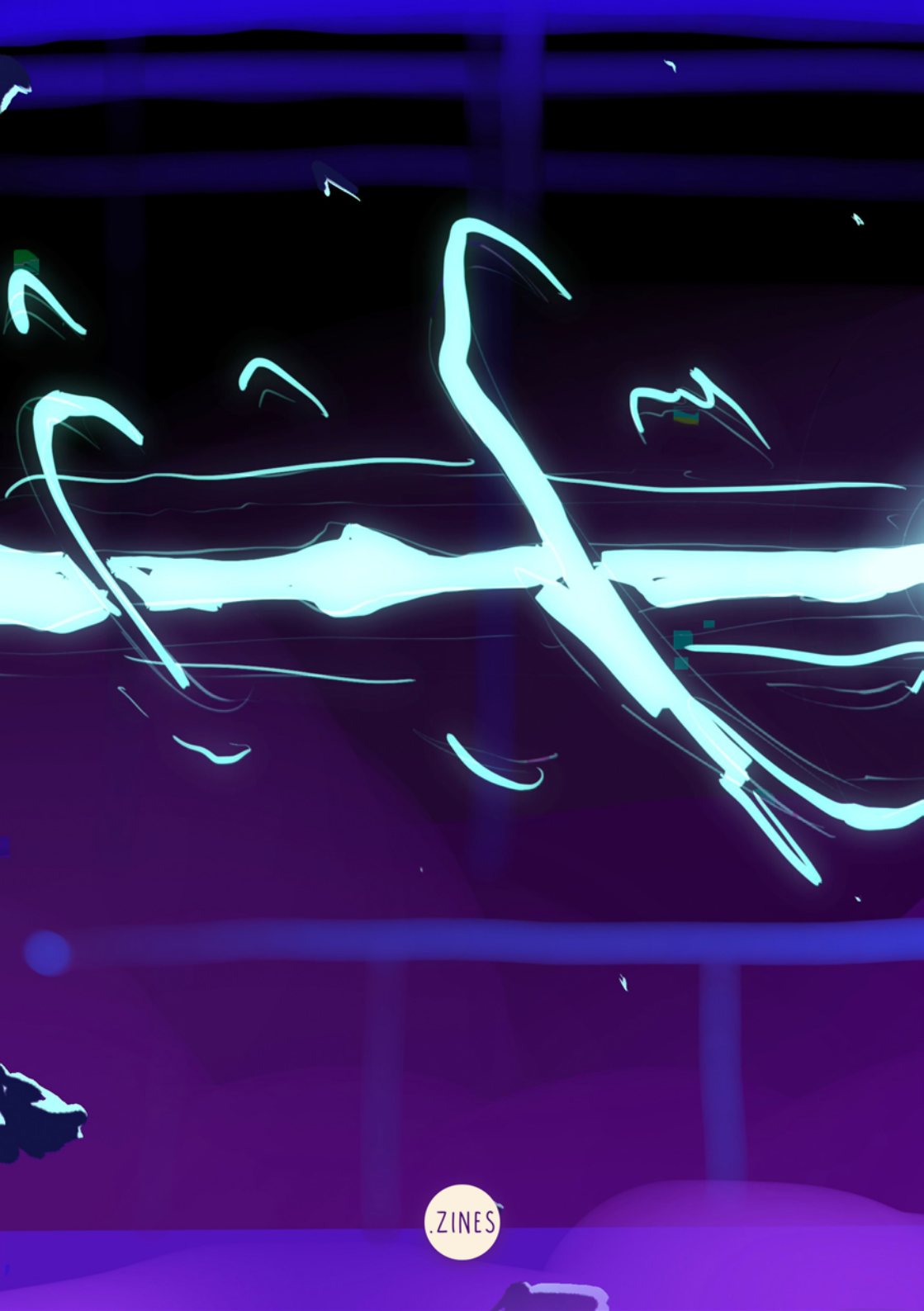
<https://www.nintendo.com/>

Metroid Prime Render

<https://metroid.retropixel.net/games/mprime/artwork/>

Metroid Dread Renders

<https://www.metroid-database.com/metroid-dread-key-art-promo-renders/>



.ZINES